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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 JEDDAH 000547

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SUBJECT: MOSQUE SERMONS FOR SAUDI ARABIA AUGUST 11:
OUTRAGE AND CONFLICT BETWEEN ISLAM AND WEST KEYNOTES OF
SERMONS FROM MECCA AND MEDINA

REF: JEDDAH 532

Classified By: Consul General Tatiana Gfoeller, for
reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) The war between Islam and the West once again inspired the sermon from the Grand Mosque in Mecca. However, this week, Imam Sheikh Dr. Saleh bin Mohammed al Talib's complaints extended far beyond Lebanon and suggest a growing hostility to Muslim involvement in the "Western-dominated" international system. In his sermon, al Talib claimed to trace a thread of anti-Muslim sentiment in Western actions dating back to the end of World War II and the founding of the United Nations.

WESTERN POWERS ATTEMPT TO END WAR THROUGH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION

¶2. (U) In his analysis, al Talib told his congregation that "when the World War came to an end, ... when the West felt the pain and destruction caused by wars, they were all convinced that there can be no progress, scientific development and prosperity that the people aspire to while guns and cannons are being fired. No home can produce a scientist while it is witnessing wailing as some of its members are being killed. At this point," said the imam, "their wise men called for the establishment of organizations, commissions, councils and societies and they strove to lay down treaties, charters and articles that guarantee for those who join them, freedom from aggression and war by neighbors."

MUSLIMS JOIN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS BUT ARE MADE THE VICTIMS OF THE WEST'S CONFLICTS

¶3. (C) Then, the imam continued by arguing essentially that the Western nations used the international organizations they developed to avert conflict among themselves by burying their historical tensions in joint domination of the Muslim World. "Many Arab and Muslim countries joined these organizations and commissions that many thought were seeking to achieve security and stability. These countries sought to join in the realization of mankind's security and progress. ... (But,) any observer of the condition of the world following the establishment of those organization and commissions does not need a lot of contemplation to realize that injustice did not decrease after that, nor did bloodshed and wars stop. But the only change was that there was a

change in the geographical location. The West moved to the East and colonized the Arab and Muslim countries. Hence, these institutions' attitude toward the Muslims' issues were not only that of a mere onlooker but they played the role of justifying the crime. A few cases of positive interventions might take place but after it was too late and after creating a new fait accompli that served the influential countries."

HUMAN RIGHTS NOT ACCORDED TO MUSLIMS

¶4. (C) The imam proceeded with a direct charge of hypocrisy: "Much as the institutions in the West theorize about human rights and expand the concept of justice and equality, the results are opposite in the Muslim countries, as if there is an inverse relation between the Western theorization and the actual reality of the East. The gap cannot be bridged between the principles of the Western peoples which they are proud of and the stances of their governments toward Muslim causes."

WESTERN INTEREST IS TO CURRY FAVOR OF MUSLIMS

¶5. (U) Al Talib then questioned why the West is hostile to the Muslim countries. "It is in the interest of Western governments," he said, "to come closer to the Muslims as their number exceeds one billion and their countries have most of the natural resources and fuel of the world. The Muslim countries are at the intersection of air, land and sea routes. Furthermore, their sons who migrated to the West have contributed significantly in the Western universities, research centers, and laboratories. They were and still are interested in peaceful coexistence with others."

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THE "FEW" ARE THE CULPRITS FOR THIS HOSTILITY.

¶6. (C) The imam found the cause for this inexplicable behavior by the West in the actions of the usual culprits--Jews and anti-Muslim, religious zealots. "Despite all the factors," the imam argued, "these considerations are disregarded and they support the Muslim's enemies who occupied their lands and displaced their people. The enemies are just a few millions. The Western countries have preferred to please the few at the expense of the great resentment of the vast majority of people. They have gained the enmity of the millions for the sake of the few, who take and do not give and seek to benefit themselves more than benefiting others and they look down on all other races."

THE "FEW" INSPIRING RELIGIOUS WAR ON MUSLIMS

¶7. (C) Al Talib can only find one reason for this irrational hostility against Muslims--religious animosity. He told the worshipers: "If these few, who have tipped the scales in their favor, were right and were just in their issues, this stance would have been acceptable and reasonable, but if we contemplate on this equation by the Western governments we will see that it is not based on the Western countries' interest except if the intention was motivated by religion or creed. Many Westerners have stated this and have shown that these people have a history marked with old enmity and a series of campaigns and wars."

IMAM DIRECTS CRITICISM AT U.S.

¶8. (U) Then al Talib condemned the behavior of the United States and Britain, criticizing the policies of "some influential governments in the world which have not succeeded in achieving anything recently except making more enemies and creating more hatred toward them. ...(T)heir strength and might will not save them when the situation starts boiling." He dismissed the arguments of the Western intelligentsia which questions "How can the West be hated when their intellectual centers seek to promote human rights, call for justice and equality, reject violence, terrorism and racial

discrimination and preach tolerant democracy? These theoreticians," he declared, "may not know that the results of their meetings and researches reach us here in the East by force, on board a tank or via the barrel of a cannon."

IMAM WARNS PEOPLE IN THE WEST WILL BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR GOVERNMENTS' POLICIES

¶9. (U) He condemned the use of the veto in international institutions against Muslim interests. "You must know," he said, apparently directing his remarks to the world at large, "that the problem is in the double standard, flagrant injustices and supporting the wrongdoer." He concluded by urging people in Western countries to change their biased attitude toward Muslim issues by changing their leaders and governments through the ballot box. "Otherwise," he warned, "everybody will be considered a partner in these acts and responsible for their consequences."

FROM MEDINA: MUSLIMS SUFFER A CENTURY OF TRIBULATIONS

¶10. (C) Outrage and anger also suffused the sermon of Sheikh Hussein Al-Sheikh, Imam of the Prophet's Mosque in Medina last Friday. Al-Sheikh told his congregation that "for one century, the Muslim Ummah has been suffering tribulations and facing aggression and brutality without any consideration for human rights, human norms, moral criteria or principles either at the hands of the Zionists or other aggressors. The Ummah has been searching for the solutions that will raise them from disgrace, defeat and weakness to the level of victory, progress and pride."

DEGRADED STATE MAY BE CORRECTED BY RETURNING TO RELIGION

¶11. (C) The imam's solution to the inferior state of the Ummah was to "return to the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet. Through these they will be able to pinpoint the real causes of their deterioration. Furthermore, it is in the Holy Qur'an and the Prophet's Sunnah that they will find the real recipe for changing their

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lives and conditions." His admonition continued with the caution that the resurrection of the Ummah will only be achieved if "they observe real obedience to their Creator and His Prophet and sincerely follow them in every small and big matter." COMMENT: In addition to a call for unity in the face of a hostile world, this exhortation to follow the dictates of the religious authorities strengthens the position of the conservative elements against advocates of reform and toleration. END COMMENT.

NO REPORT FROM EASTERN PROVINCE

¶12. (U) No mosque report was received from the Eastern Province this week.
Gfoeller